COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"The few of us who have protracted life to the extreme limits of our short period, have been condemned to see extraordinary things: new systems of policy, new opinions, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe, that a man who lived forty years ago, if the intermediate space were expunged from his memory, would hardly credit his senses, if told from the highest authority, that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this Island; that in the neighbouring island there were, at least, four score thousand more; but, when he should hear of this immense army, what must be his astonishment to find, that it was supported for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence; and, that, in its far greater part, it was disabled, by its constitution and very essence, from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any operation of active hostility."——Letter from MR. BURKE to Dr. Laurence, 1797.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

RUSSIA.——The sanguine hopes, which some persons entertained of the interference of Russia, in the present war, seem to be almost entirely dissipated. It was, from the first, evident, that this power, however great in itself, could do nothing, in a war against France, without the hearty co-operation of Austria; and, there were many and weighty reasons why that co-operation should not be obtained. It is rumoured on the Continent, that a personal interview is about to take place between the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia. Whether this interview will take place or not it is impossible for us to know; but, those who wish not to be deceived will be careful not to ground thereon any hopes of an offensive alliance between Russia and Prussia. Prussia dares not stir; and, if she dared, she would not, while there was the least chance that England or Austria might profit from her movements.

FRANCE.——It is said, that the French minister at Ratisbon has given in to the Diet an answer to the note of Russia, and that Mr. Hedouville, the French ambassador has been recalled from St. Petersburgh. This may be prematurely stated; but, it is by no means incredible; and, there is no doubt, that Napoleon means not to yield even a hair's breadth to his brother Emperor. ——The exaltation of Buonaparté has, it is said, been formally announced to all the courts of Germany, where there can be little doubt of his title being immediately acknowledged; and, as to Russia, its withholding its acknowledgment for a time will be of very little use. The fact is, that, when thirty-five millions of people, such people as the French, and situated as the French people are, choose to say that they will have an Emperor, an Emperor they must have. It is the same with respect to the change of the state of Europe. If the French people will revive the military age, the military age must be revived. Other nations may complain; universal philanthropy may put forth all its whining powers; merchants and shopkeepers may cry, like a Jew when you have kicked over his box of trinkets; but, still it is of no use. If a nation like the French, placed in the heart of Europe, and having a government fully capable of giving effect to the general inclination; if such a nation, so situated and governed, will insist upon making the nations of Europe military nations, they must become military, or they must be conquered by France, to whatever extent France may think proper to carry her conquests. Nor will it, amongst those who take time to reflect, and whose souls are not absorbed in the love of wealth and of ease, be a subject of regret, that there has arisen a power capable of producing this change. Europe was buried in luxury and baseness. There was a manifest degeneracy in her people. There wanted something to rouse them, to chasten them, to render them more worthy of the delightful and favoured land they inhabited. The scourge has been severe: some nations have been completely obliterated: the work of chastisement is still going on; and, it yet remains to be known, whether *we* shall prove ourselves worthy of being spared, worthy of remaining a free and independent nation, worthy of enjoying those blessings which were handed down to us by our forefathers.——The preparations for invasion are said to continue. That there have, however, been recently made any great additions to the force apparently destined against this country, no proof appears to exist. Indeed, it is so obviously the interest of the enemy *to do nothing*, that we may be pretty well assured, that he will not, at present, attempt a descent upon this country. He knows well, that he has nothing to do but to leave us as we are, and in pursuit of our present systems, for the space of

four or five years. If another sort of politicians were to take the helm, indeed, his plans might be disconcerted; but, against Mr. Pitt and his systems Buonaparté must be mad, if he ever thinks of employing a single soldier, except by way of loup-garou, or hobgobbling; and, if he were an economist, he might make a considerable saving by quartering paste-board or wooden soldiers along the coast.——The trial of the conspirators is going on at Paris. All good and loyal men will lament if Georges and his old companions should suffer. Let us hope that Buonaparté, now that he is an Emperor, will know how to admire the unparalleled loyalty of these gallant men. By pardoning them he would do more for his character than can ever be done for it by any other means. Very different indeed is the situation of Georges from that of Moreau, or any of those, who had aided in the revolution, and who could have no reasonable and valid objection against the authority of Buonaparté. There is no proof that Georges and his companions meant to assassinate; and, if there were, some allowance is to be made for their long state of irritation; for the sufferings that they had undergone in consequence of the cruelties of the republicans, by whom the parents, the wives and children, the brothers and sisters, of the far greater part of them, had been massacred, or murdered in cold blood. Bouvet, for instance, who is one upon the melancholy list, had seven brothers, every one of whom was murdered, at different times, by the republicans, acting under the orders of the Consular government. Is there not great allowances to be made for such a man? That heart must be hard indeed which feels not great compassion for him, even supposing him to have contemplated the crime of assassination; and, totally devoid of justice must that mind be, which does not widely discriminate between the case of Bouvet and Moreau.

Corps Diplomatique.—The appointment of Mr. Arbuthnot to succeed Mr. Drummond, at Constantinople, is, perhaps, a change for the better; but, would it not have been still more prudent to send to that important post a person of longer standing and greater experience? The Danes are in an excellent disposition, at this time; they are decidedly hostile to, and resolutely determined to resist, the further encroachments of France. This very favourable circumstance we owe, in a great measure, to the zeal, ability, experience, and conciliating manners of Mr. Liston; and, though one could have wished him to remain at Copenhagen, yet there is every reason to hope that his place will be very satisfactorily supplied by Mr. Garlike, who is appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to that Court, and who is extremely well calculated to cherish and preserve a disposition favourable to his country. Amongst the late promotions, every one who is acquainted with the character and services of Mr. Thornton, late sec. of legation in America, will rejoice to see, that he is going in that capacity to the court of Berlin. But, who is to go to St. Petersburgh? Is it possible, that, in this critical state of Europe, no exchange of ambassador is to take place there? Cannot Mr. Pitt find, amongst all his numerous friends, one experienced person of high rank and great consideration to send to that court? British œconomy is the strangest thing in the world: we very contentedly bear taxes, till we can hardly stagger along under them, in order to enrich the vile Jews of the 'Change; but, we look at a guinea and turn it ten times over before we will part with it for the purpose of adding to the allowance of an ambassador, though we know, that, in many cases, and, indeed, in most cases, the success of his efforts depends upon the expenses he is able to go into. This is the folly of no other nation. It is a plant peculiar to this soil; and it has grown with more rankness than ever since the commencement of the power of Mr. Pitt, who, rocked in the cradle of party, nursed in the House of Commons, has never attached much importance to any thing but the result of a debate. The Bank, indeed, has, of late years, been the rival of St. Stephens; and, very lately, the circumstances of the times have produced a rage for volunteering and military projects; but, towards our diplomatique concerns his attention seems never to have been, even by chance, directed. Of the gifts that Lord Harrowby has in this way, we shall, probably, be made acquainted by woeful experience.——As somewhat connected with this subject, the answer, which the French have published to the circular note of Lord Hawkesbury, may here be mentioned. It was by no means difficult to triumph over so miserable a performance, a performance that would have been a disgrace to the talents of *any* man, and what, then, must it be to a minister of state of a great nation, or rather, what must it be to that nation? Thus it is that we have sunk, and are sinking, in the eyes of Europe. We have lost our ancient reputation for solid wisdom, firmness, integrity, and energy. The nations of the world now behold in our statesmen, a set of shuffling sophisticating dispu-

tants, who place reliance, not upon their character and abilities, or, in the last resort, upon the spirit of the country, but upon their cuteness, their cunning tricks, their outwitting of their opponent; not recollecting that such qualities and arts, though the only resource of petty states, are sure to be the ruin of a great kingdom, if employed for any considerable length of time.

SLAVE TRADE.—— On the 30th ultimo Mr. Wilberforce made a motion, in the House of Commons, for the House to go into a committee, in order to consider of the propriety of introducing a bill for the purpose of effecting an abolition of the Slave Trade. The motion was finally carried, and the bill is now before the House, having already gone through several stages. The preamble of this bill says: "whereas the slave trade is "*contrary to the principles of justice and hu-*"*manity*." Very short and pithy! One would have thought, that when the character, not only of a very considerable number of British subjects, but also that of the government, in all its branches, not excepting the House of Commons itself; one would have thought, that, when all this character was at stake, that a little more ceremony might have been used. But, as it has frequently been observed, the love of the negro-race is a passion which knows no bounds, and, indeed, partakes in no trifling degree of the nature of the beloved object. This must certainly be the case, or, it is impossible to conceive, why the preamble to this bill should have fixed upon the whole English nation, for more than a century and a half back, the odious and detestable charge of injustice and inhumanity.——The object of the bill appears to be to abolish the slave trade altogether, but not immediately, perhaps. It consists of prohibitions to carry, to land in the king's dominions or elsewhere, or to receive, slaves from Africa or any where else; together with a clause for nullifying all insurances of vessels carrying slaves, and for making such vessels prizes to ships of war and others.——To enter upon a discussion of the question of the slave trade would, at any time, require a very grave apology; but, no apology could possibly be sufficient for attempting it at this listless season of the year. It is a question so completely worn out, and rendered so disgusting by the unaccountable perverseness, with which it was, on both sides, maintained, that people of ordinary nerves shudder at the recollection of it, and, rather than be compelled to listen to a repetition of the whole never ending controversy, not a few of them would consent to be deprived of the power of hearing. Seeing that such is the character of the subject; and, being of opinion also, that the bill, having already answered its *chief purpose*, will now be translated to the upper House, there quietly to repose in the tomb of its forefathers, I by no means intend to give it any annoyance on its passage, but, to turn from it at once to a matter, with which it is somewhat connected, and which, in my humble opinion, concerns us much more nearly than any thing that can take place on the coast of Africa, or in the West Indies; I mean, the importation, the fostering, and the propagation of blacks in the United Kingdom, particularly England. But, before, I enter on this topic, I wish just to make one remark or two on the tone, which the partizans of the negroes now take. In all their arguments, they proceed, as if it were allowed, even by their opponents, that the slave trade is contrary to the principles of justice and humanity; and, of course, they are extremely irritated, that those opponents refuse to confess that they are unjust and inhuman wretches. But, the truth is, that we, who are steadily for the slave trade, positively deny that it is contrary to any one principle either of justice or humanity; nor will we allow, that we are wanting in any of those sentiments, the prevalence of which tend to make us just, merciful, and kind. Few men have bestowed more time upon this subject than I have; few have read more or conversed more upon it; few have more earnestly, more diligently, or more disinterestedly, sought for information relative thereto; very few have had better opportunities of forming a correct judgment, while no one ever was in a situation to form a judgment more impartial. I have seen negroes in a state of slavery, and I have seen free negroes: in all sorts of employments and under all sorts of treatment, I have had a fair opportunity of observing them: and, which is not, in this case, an unimportant circumstance, I have never had a slave, nor any interest in a slave, or the labour of a slave, in the whole course of my life. And, I have no scruple to declare, hoping that I am, when occasion calls for it, able to maintain, that the slave trade is neither unjust nor inhuman; that it is contrary neither to religion nor morality; and that its continuation is at present demanded upon principles of sound policy. ——The importation and propagation of negroes in *this country* is, however, with me, a matter of much greater importance than the manner of catching them in Africa, or working them in the West-Indies. The first care of every wise statesman and legis-

lator will be, to prevent the people, the common people, from being, by any means whatever, degraded in their mind and character; and, there are no means of national degradation, against which he will be more anxious to guard, because none are so fatal and so lasting, as those connected with the introduction of debased foreigners, by which the very nature of the population must, in time, be materially affected. When I look over the voluminous returns of the population of this kingdom, I cannot help regretting that such large sums of money were expended, and such immense pains bestowed in the producing of so imperfect a result. I would have dispensed with the distinction of male and female, and some others, if I could have obtained, in lieu of them, a pretty accurate account of the number of *foreigners*, distinguishing particularly, *Jews*, *Negroes*, and *Mulattoes*; for, when I reflect on the vast number of these that I see in and about this town, I view the brilliant total of "our immensely increased population" with feelings very different indeed from those which I should otherwise entertain. To confine myself, at present, to the Negroes, (with a promise, however, not to forget the Jews another time) who, that has any sense or decency, can help being shocked at the familiar intercourse, which has gradually been gaining ground, and which has, at last, got a complete footing between the Negroes and the women of England? No black swain need, in this loving country, hang himself in despair. No inquiry is made whether he be a Pagan or a Christian; if he be not a downright cripple, he will, if he be so disposed, always find a woman, not merely to yield to his filthy embraces, that, amongst the notoriously polluted and abandoned part of the sex, would be less shocking, but to accompany him *to the altar*, to become his wife, to breed English mulattoes, to stamp the mark of Cain upon her family and her country! Amongst white women, this disregard of decency, this defiance of the dictates of nature, this foul, this beastly propensity, is, I say it with sorrow and with shame, *peculiar to the English*. In no other country is it known. In America I never *heard* but of two instances, one of which came under my own observation, at Wilmington, in the State of Delaware, where a white woman had, by some strolling methodist, been married to a negro. But, the exception was such as to establish the rule; the life of this wretched woman was a warning to others to avoid her crime. She was, to all practical intents and purposes, in a state of excommunication. Had she been afflicted with the leprosy or the plague; had it been declared death by the law to communicate with her; nothing that the human mind can conceive could have more completely dissevered her from all connexion with society. She was, indeed, a woman in low life; there were, however, many more poor, much more destitute of food and raiment; but, there was not a hut so miserable as to suffer her to enter it, nor was there man, woman, or child so base as to condescend to exchange a word with her. Her parents and relations all disowned her as decidedly and effectually as if she had never belonged to them; and, in short, she was, with respect to the white people of the country, in a state of death during her life. This unfortunate girl, if she had happened to come to England, would have been quite a respectable personage. She might have strutted, as we see many of her like, through the Mall, arm in arm with her sooty-faced spouse; and, in due time, she might, perhaps, have been followed by a white maid, carrying her mulatto child, or, even by a white footman. One of the first things that attracted my attention, after my return to England, was a mulatto driving up St. James's Street in a curricle with two English grooms behind him. I have no scruple to say, that, if this cannot be otherwise prevented, every colony the nation ought to be instantly abandoned; for, it is a trait of degradation and infamy that no nation ought to live under. But, it can be prevented; it has been, and it is, prevented, in other countries; in Spain, in Portugal, and in France most effectually. Before the revolution there was a law strictly prohibiting the landing of any negro or negress, or mulatto or mulattress, without express permission; and, if permission was granted, it was under heavy bonds as to the consequences. The same law was revived about a year and a half ago, allowing a certain time for all negroes, &c. to remove out of the territory of France. A wiser law, a law more characteristic of high mind, never was passed. It discovers an attention to the honourable feelings of the common people, whose blood it is desirous of preserving unadulterated, and of sending it down pure to their posterity. Here, on the contrary, we seem to glory in our shame. None of the common people are so much caressed as the negroes; and many, too many, of the rich, in the wildness, in the insolent caprice of their luxury, choose to regard them, and to treat them, as beings not only equal, but somewhat superior, to even the middling classes of the people. In the theatres they are ad-

mitted where a private soldier would be thrusted out with scorn, and, perhaps, not without blows, or more serious punishment. *In the army*, too, I am sorry to say it, they are but too often received, where they never ought to show their heads, in any capacity, or upon any condition Not content with having negro regiments in the West Indies, we must have a negro regiment at home; and, amongst " the *gallant defenders*" of England, we have the honour to reckon a regiment of Africans! This is one of the things to be done away, before there ever will be *an army* in this country, such as this country stands in need of, and such as it *must* have, if it means to preserve itself from subjugation. But, the instance of negro-pampering, the most daring and most mischievous of all, is the " *academy*" at Clapham, for rearing negro priests; nor would it be at all surprising, if an attempt were made, at no very distant period, to introduce some of them into the Church. While an institution like this exists, is it astonishing that the daughters of poor people should cohabit and marry with negroes? Yes; though I would fain make an apology for my country-women, I cannot! Yes; notwithstanding all the encouragement they receive from the rich, still their own conduct is foul, unnatural, and detestable.

LORD ADVOCATE.——On the 6th instant a motion was made, by Mr. Whitbread, in the House of Commons, for the production of certain public records of the county of Banff, in Scotland, relating to the Lord Advocate's conduct towards a farmer of that county named Morison; who, it appears, had discharged a man from his service, because the latter had attended at the muster and field day of a corps of volunteers, to which he belonged. The man drew up a memorial, of which the following has been published as a copy: " Memorial for Ro-
" bert Garrow, private volunteer in Captain
" John Macbean's company, of the 2d bat-
" talion of Banffshire volunteers.——That
" the memorialist was regularly engaged to
" serve James Morison, farmer, in Whyntie,
" for the half-year commencing at Whit-
" sunday last, at six guineas of fee; and the
" memorialist accordingly entered home to
" Mr. Morison's service, in terms of his
" agreement at that term.——That some
" time thereafter the memorialist enrolled
" himself a volunteer in the said company
" without having previously obtained the
" consent of his said master for doing so,
" and continued to attend punctually at
" drill with the company, after his ordinary
" work was finished, in the evenings, until
" the 13th October last, when, to his great
" surprise, Mr. Morison discharged him
" from his service, because the memorialist
" had gone to Cullen on the day preceding,
" without his master's permission to attend
" in his place, at the inspection of the com-
" pany, by Major General the Marquis of
" Huntly; and that although the memo-
" rialist before he set out to join his com-
" pany, and also when he was dismissed as
" aforesaid, offered to make ample recom-
" pence to Mr. Morison, in work or in mo-
" ney, for the loss of his labour during his
" necessary absence on duty in his Majesty's
" service, at the inspection of said battalion.
" —— Quæ.—Will the memorialist, under
" the above mentioned circumstances, be
" well founded in an action against Mr.
" Morison, of his said stipulated fee, and
" for wages besides, since the said 13th day
" of October, when he was dismissed from
" his service as aforesaid, until Martinmas
" last: or would counsel rather advise the
" memorialist to restrict his claim against
" Mr. Morison to payment of his work from
" the said term of Whitsunday last to the
" said 13th October? In short, the memo-
" rialist is desirous to know if or not he has
" any claim against his said master, and to
" what extent?"——This memorial, Mr. Whitbread stated, was submitted to the Lord Advocate for his opinion thereon, which opinion was given in the words hereafter to be seen, followed by a letter from the Lord Advocate, upon the same subject, to Mr. Forbes, the sheriff substitute of Banffshire; and, in consequence of which letter the sheriff substitute recommended a copy of it to be sent to Mr. Morison by the sheriff's clerk, who was ordered to keep the original in the record of the court. The sheriff's clerk did as he was recommended; and, he accompanied his communication to Mr. Morison with a recommendation to make the complainant, Garrow, as handsome an allowance as possible, as being the best means of removing the severity of the Lord Advocate's opinion. With the aid of this short introduction, the papers will speak for themselves.——" OPINION. However unprin-
" cipled and oppressive Mr. Morison's con-
" duct seems to have been, I am afraid that
" the memorialist has no claim against him,
" except for wages up to the day that he was
" dismissed from his service, to which he is
" certainly entitled The opinion of
(Signed) C. HOPE."
" Edinburgh, Dec. 29, 1803.

Edinburgh, Dec. 30.

" SIR,——I return you the memorial,
" with my opinion; and in the circum-

" stances of this case I decline taking any " fee, which I also return to you. The case " in the memorial is one of those for which, " unfortunately, no provision is made in " any of the Volunteer Acts, and therefore, " of course, a person who neglects his mas- " ter's work, on account of attending drills " or r views, is, I am afraid, in the same si- " tuation with a servant doing so from any " other cause. The conduct of Morison, " however, is most atrocious, and every pos- " sible means ought to be taken to stigma- " tise him, and to punish, by the scorn and " contempt of all the respectable men of " the country, who ought to enter into a re- " solution to have no communication or " dealings with him whatever. And far- " ther, as I consider that Morison's con- " duct can only have arisen from a secret " spirit of disaffection and disloyalty, it is " my orders to you, as sheriff's substitute " of the county, that on the first French- " man landing in Scotland, you do imme- " diately apprehend and secure Morison as " a suspected person, and you will not libe- " rate him without a communication with " me; and you may inform him of these " my orders. And farther, I shall do all I " can to prevent him from receiving any " compensation for any part of his property " which may either be destroyed by the " enemy, or by the King's troops, to prevent " it from falling into the enemy's hands. I " am, Sir, &c.

(Signed) " C. HOPE."

" Addressed to George Forbes, Esq. Sheriff " Substitute of Banff shire."

" I recommended to the sheriff's clerk " to transcribe this letter, and send the copy " to Morison; keeping the principal in the " record of court.

(Signed) " G. FORBES."

" Banff, 4th Jan. 1804.

" SIR,—In consequence of what is above " stated, the before written copy has been " made out, and is now sent you. I regret " you should have exposed yourself to so " much censure, and would recommend to " you the propriety of settling with Garrow, " by making him as handsome an allowance " as possible, as being the best means of " removing the severity of the Lord Ad- " vocate's opinion.—I am, Sir, your most " obedient servant,

" To Mr. Morison. (Signed) PAT. ROSE."

Mr. Pitt, in answer to the speech of Mr. Whitbread, began by saying, that he had no intention to object to the papers moved for; but, on the contrary, should be glad to see them before the House, being covinced, that the construction, which had been put on them was more than they would fairly bear. He begged the House not to be prejudiced from the statement they had heard, but to consider the matter impartially, as being a question of the utmost importance. The conduct of the Lord Advocate, he believed, had proceeded from the purest motives of public zeal, and not from any personal malice. He considered it as the purest zeal, operating upon a strong and ardent mind; and, it would remain to be considered, how much the public ought to be interested in one who has been the uniform champion of the constitution, and who has given so many proofs of his patriotism and public spirit. Mr. Pitt expressed his wonder, that this matter had not been brought on sooner; seeing that the subject of the complaint existed in October, and seeing that the Lord Advocate had attended his duty in parliament since that time.——Mr. Fox observed, that, whatever might be the motives of the Lord Advocate, in the conduct he had, on this occasion pursued, he thought, that, if no better argument could be found in his favour than that of an ardent mind, his case must be desperate indeed. What! said he, shall ardour of mind, in a highly responsible character like this, be an apology for flagrant injustice? In this very House, where we have so often been reminded of the extravagancies and miseries of the French revolution, what sort of apology will an ardent mind afford for outrages offered to justice, to decency, to every thing sacred in domestic and social life? That an investigation into this subject has not been made sooner, said he, must be attributed to consequences, of which oppression is not unfrequently the cause. The oppressed are afraid, and, in many cases, incapable, of complaining, in proportion to the weight and injustice of the oppression.—— On the 14th instant Mr. Whitbread stated, that he understood the papers relative to this subject were not arrived. His intention was, he said, to bring forward a motion upon the subject, and he wished to have a day for the purpose; but, he was desirous, that this day might be so fixed as to suit the convenience of the parties concerned, and that it might not precede the arrival of the official documents, on which he intended to found his motion. ——This is a matter of very great importance; it involves the character of a person in very high and great authority, and, at the same time, the liberty, nay, even the personal safety, of the subject. Every man must agree with Mr. Pitt, that the parliament and the country should come to the discussion of this question with minds to-

tally unprejudiced. No opinion should be made up, no character given to the transaction, or to the conduct of either of the parties, till we have heard what all parties have to urge. I shall make no apology for having occupied so much room in endeavouring to direct the public attention to this subject, there being not the least doubt, in my mind, that the result of the discussion will be of much greater consequence to us than the determiation of the question, whether we shall retain or deliver up Malta.

MILITARY PROJECT.——This subject was treated of, in the preceding sheet, p. 912 to p. 928; but, during the discussion of it, in the parliament, new matter has arisen, and there are now some additional observations to make. On Friday, the 8th instant, upon a motion made by Mr. Pitt for the bill being read a second time, there ensued a long, animated, and interesting debate, which, terminating in a division, 221 for, and 181 against, the motion, give additional importance to the subject. On Monday, the 11th instant, upon the motion of Mr. Pitt for the Speaker's leaving the chair, in order for the House to go into a committee on the bill, a division, at the end of a short debate, took place, when there appeared for the motion 219, and against it, 169. After the House was in committee a sharp and long conversation, or rather dispute, arose, as to whether the bill should go through the committee *pro forma* and be recommitted on a future day, or whether it should go through and not be recommitted. At last the minister agreed to the former; the report was brought up, and ordered to be received on Thursday. Here, as to the history of the progress of the bill, it is necessary to stop, for the present; because the observations about to be offered will apply chiefly to the principles of the bill, and especially to such new matter as arose during the two debates above spoken of.—Upon the subject of the quota-men, raised last war, Mr. Yorke gave some curious information to the House. He said, that, though the number of those obtained for the army amounted to about seven thousand, there were only fourteen hundred of them retained as fit for military service, and of these, he stated, that only about six hundred were now in existence. It is, indeed, said by those who support the present bill, that it essentially differs from the quota bill, in as much as it restrains the parish-officers as to the amount of the bounty, and as it does not impose a very heavy penalty upon the parishes, in any case, and no penalty at all, unless the quota of men are not raised. But, in contending for the lenient qualities of this new bill, its efficient qualities must be abandoned; for, if, with unlimited bounties in their hands, and urged on by heavy penalties, the parish-officers failed before to obtain any thing near their quota of men, what is to be expected from them, when they are confined to very low bounties and have not heavy penalties to stimulate them?—— There was one gentleman spoke of the conduct of those, who disapproved of the bill, as presenting a remarkable instance of political inconsistency, if not of perverseness. Alluding particularly to Mr. Windham, he said: "we are all calling out for an additional force, and a right hon. gent. who has taken an active part in every thing relating to the defence of the country, has objected to every single measure, that has been brought forward professing that object. To the system of ballot, to the volunteer system, and now to the present measure, which is neither: he has always objections at command. The cry for raising an additional military force remains undiminished, and yet a bill professing that object some gentlemen would throw out in its present stage." As to this statement, it is most true: true, very true indeed, that Mr. Windham has desired, and does still most anxiously desire, to see an "additional military force;" and it is also true, that he now opposes, and wishes to put a stop to, a measure "*professing* that object;" but, his opposition arises from his belief, his thorough persuasion and conviction, that the professions of this measure are deceitful; that they will not, and cannot, be realized; and, in short, that the bill will *not* produce "an additional military force," but will, on the contrary, tend to prevent the addition, which would otherwise be made to our military force by the ordinary means of recruiting. Therefore, though the premises be true, the inference left to be drawn is certainly false. Mr. Windham has, from first to last, called upon the ministers to provide the country with an efficient regular army; an army that might be kept at home, or sent abroad, just as circumstances required; an army that might be wielded as a soldier wields his musket or his sword. And, having asked for an army like this, is he to be contented because you give him militia and volunteers? Having asked for a trusty Toledo, is he to be contented because you give him a blade of cast-iron or block-tin? "Who, when he asks bread of you, is satisfied if you give him a stone?" And, is

it likely that he should be pacified, merely because you give him a choice of stones? Still they are worthless flint, instead of the staff of life; and, as to your adding to their number and variety, it can only add to his disappointment and vexation. If Mr. Windham had called out for militia, volunteers, and quota-men; then, indeed, it would have been inconsistent in him to oppose the several measures, which have been brought forward with a view of encouraging and increasing that sort of levies; but, having uniformly insisted, that we stood in need of a good regular army, and having not less uniformly or less strenuously maintained, that all the other levies tended to impede the recruiting of the regular army, it will, in his present conduct, be utterly impossible to discover even the slightest degree of inconsistency. — Yet, we find Mr. Pitt condescending to use, against Mr. Windham, an argument not much sounder or more fair than the one just commented on. "From the particular tenor of the "language of my right hon. friend," said he, "I find a *verbal* adherence to opinions, "formerly delivered, but not followed by "any *practical consequences*. I have heard of "vigorous measures to meet a great and "impending danger, and of the propriety "of using the utmost efforts to recruit our "regular army. I have heard it strongly "inculcated, that every means should be "used to keep alive the spirit of the country; that the people should be taught to "feel that the amount of the sacrifices they "must submit to, and of the exertions they "must be called upon to make, are not to "be calculated from any thing they have "heard of in former periods, much less "from any thing they have ever witnessed "in times of peace; that their minds must "be raised to a level with the new order "of things in which the world is placed. "All these animating exhortations I have "often heard; and, what was the object "of them, if they were not intended to "lead to some practical effect? But, if I "am now to listen to a refined argument, "as to the probable litigation in parishes, "I cannot hesitate to pronounce such a "line of conduct very extraordinary; and, "I must freely confess, that I never ex"pected to hear the tone of my right hon. "friend sunk so low as to introduce "petty parochial considerations into the "discussion of a subject, involving "the fundamental interests of this country, "and the best hopes of Europe." This is arguing, from beginning to end, upon assumed grounds. It is the manner, in which a methodist preacher reasons in order to establish the super-excellence of his sect. He tells you, that he and his brethren are much honester and more pious than any other men, and he proceeds to his conclusion, just as if this was an acknowledged, or a self-evident, fact; and, if, instead of contending against the correctness of that conclusion, you are bold enough to go back and to question the premises, he turns up his nose with contempt, and sets you down as a person too unreasonable to be disputed with. To have authorised the inference of Mr. Pitt, it would be necessary for the characteristics, which he has here ascribed to his measure, to have been *acknowledged* by Mr. Windham; or, for them to have been self-evident to the whole world: whereas, few persons have even pretended to perceive them, and Mr. Windham positively denies their existence. If, indeed, he had acknowledged this bill to be a "vigorous measure;" if he had acknowledged, that it comprised "the utmost efforts to recruit the regular army, and the means to keep alive the spirit of the country;" if he had acknowledged that this bill "involved the fundamental interests of this country and the best hopes of Europe;" if Mr. Windham had acknowledged all this, instead of having distinctly denied it all, in that case the reasoning of Mr. Pitt would have been applicable and fair. It is very true, that Mr. Windham, and many other persons, who now oppose this bill, have, a hundred times, inculcated the necessity of the people's making very great sacrifices, sacrifices not only greater than they ever before made, but far greater than they ever dreamed of, or imagined it possible to make. But, when he called upon the people to prepare for the making of sacrifices, can it be supposed, that he meant to confine the meaning of the word people to paupers, poachers, vagrants, and other poor creatures, who have nothing to sacrifice but the lives of themselves and their wives and children? Can Mr. Pitt have possibly understood Mr. Windham as confining within this miserable sphere his animating exhortations to the making of sacrifices? He called upon the *whole nation* to be ready to make great sacrifices, and his call was, of course, more particularly addressed to those, who had the means of making such sacrifices; and, is he now to be blamed, because, amongst his reasons for disapproving of the present measure, he states his apprehensions of its operating in a most unjust and oppressive manner on the poor, feeble, and friendless part of the community, while those who are able to bear the burden may, probably, remain

totally unaffected by it? Besides, when Mr. Windham and others called for sacrifices, nobody will deny that they meant such sacrifices as were calculated to preserve the country from the inroads of the enemy, and to enable it, if occasion served, to inflict vengeance upon that enemy: such sacrifices, in short, as would be *useful* to the country. But, it is not, by the opponents of the bill, allowed, that any of the sacrifices now proposed to be made would be at all useful to the country; and, as to the oppression, which the proposed law might bring upon the poor and distressed, it is maintained, that, in place of being useful, it would be extremely injurious to the military service, and, of course, to the nation. To render even plausible the charge of inconsistency, against those who called for sacrifices, and who disapprove of the present military project, it is essentially necessary first to show, that they have, in some way or other, acknowledged that the project, if carried into effect, would be *efficient*; and, as this cannot be shown, as these persons have, on the contrary, maintained, and still do maintain, that the project will be inefficient, and, of course, that any sacrifice it extorts is so much extorted in vain and deducted from the means of making other and really useful exertions, the charge of inconsistency cannot for a moment be supported. ——Upon the topic of committing the business of recruiting to the hands of parish-officers it would be unfair to overlook the high authorities and cogent arguments of Mr. Robert Ward. "The bill," said he, "perfectly accords with the habits of our "ancestors at a very ancient period of our "history, so far back indeed as the Saxon "æra. It is the mode of raising men which "Alfred the Great had recourse to. That "great monarch committed the care of "providing a supply for his army to per-"sons, who, at that time, held situations in "the country *exactly similar* to those of the "overseers and church-wardens of parishes "at present. It cannot be conceived as at "all likely to injure the military character "to have the army recruited through the "agency of such persons; certainly not so "much so as by the employing of ordinary "recruiting serjeants. For the *justification* "of this remark I will only refer to the "well-known story of Serjeant Kite in the "drama, from which *it appears*, that sol-"diers raised by the ordinary mode of re-"cruiting are not very likely to be so re-"spectable as some gentlemen seem to "think." Without taking the liberty to participate in the doubts, which very profound writers have entertained, as to the reality of the history of "Alfred the Great," his harp, his wars, and his armies, one may certainly be permitted to ask Mr. Ward, whence he derives his information respecting the mode, in which those armies were raised; and, more especially, whence he has learnt, that there were, in the time of Alfred, "persons holding situations in the "country, *exactly similar* to those of the "overseers and church-wardens at present." If Mr. Ward could produce us a history of that time of unquestionable authenticity, it would, perhaps, be very difficult indeed for him to show, that the state of society then bore a resemblance to the state of society now any nearer than that which, at this time exists, between the people of England and those of the wilds of Siberia. From *romance* Mr. Ward comes to the *drama*, and refers us to the "well-known story of Serjeant "Kite, whence *it appears*," that the ordinary mode of recruiting is not very likely to obtain respectable soldiers. "It *appears!*" What! does Mr. Ward, then, produce the characters and dialogue of a play as *proof* of an important fact, and that, too, in the Parliament House? Is he, in this respect, like Betty the grizette, who

> "Every lie for gospel took,
> "If once she read it in a book?"

As plays appear to be indubitable authorities with Mr. Ward, we may, without going back to the days of Alfred, furnish him with a description of the persons likely to be raised by parish officers and magistrates. "Attends the youth," says the Justice in the Critic, "whose most *opprobrious fame* and "*clear convicted crimes* have stamped him "soldier?" And, if Mr. Ward had stopped at the time of Falstaff, instead of going back to Alfred, he would have seen Justice Shallow and Justice Simple in the very act of raising quota-men and delivering them over to the military commander. He would, too, have found such of the men, thus raised, as had any money, bribing the inferior officers in order to let them off, under pretext of their being unfit for service, and, by these means, throwing the burden of compulsory service upon those only who had neither money nor friends. In short, had he opened the Second Part of Henry the IVth, Scene the 2d, he would have had a pretty complete view of what, in some parishes at least, is but too likely to be re-acted under the operation of the bill now before Parliament, if it should, at last, become a law in its present form. ——Mr. Pitt argued as if those, who apprehended acts of oppres-

sion in the parishes, thereby cast an odious imputation on the magistrates. "Gentlemen," said he, "say, that many abuses "will arise out of the execution of this "bill; that the parish officers will act unjustly, and, that the poor will be oppressed; but, those gentlemen seem *to forget*, "that there are any magistrates in the "country to prevent such oppression, and "to punish any petty tyrants that may attempt to practise it." No; they did not seem to forget, that there were magistrates; so far from it, that the oppression which they apprehend must, if at all exercised, be exercised with the knowledge, if not with the consent, or, at least, with the connivance, of the magistrates. This argument of Mr. Pitt compelled the opponents of the bill to attach their apprehensions partly to the conduct of the magistrates, or, to allow, that there was no good ground for the apprehensions. Its tendency was to represent the fears of the opposition as throwing an obloquy on the character of all the magistrates in the kingdom. That this was a most unfair way of arguing will be evident the moment it comes to be examined. Mr. Fox observed, in reply to this part of Mr. Pitt's speech, that, "it was undoubtedly "true, that the magistrates of this country "deserved great praise for their pure administration of the laws; but, still, it was "contrary to every principle of jurisprudence to *give them an interest* in stretching the law." It was not from the general character of the magistrates; it was not from their general conduct; it was not from a persuasion that they were deficient either in information, wisdom, or integrity, that the apprehensions of Mr. Windham and others arose; but, it was from the circumstance, that, by this bill, powerful motives would be created in the breasts of the magistrates to deviate from that justice and moderation, which, in general, characterize their proceedings. Nor, is it to cast any imputation upon the magistrates to suppose them, or some of them at least, capable of being, to a certain degree, influenced by their interests. It is our daily boast, that we have, in the *independence* of the judges, a security for their upright and impartial administration of justice; yet, in the utterance of sentiments like this, no one imagines, that he is throwing an imputation upon the Bench; and, would not a person think himself extremely unfairly treated, if his objection to a repeal of the statute by which the judges were placed beyond the power of temptation, was to be construed into a declaration of his belief, that those judges were naturally corrupt men? It is a maxim universally adopted, that, as all men have, and must have, a bias towards their own interests, those interests ought never, if it can be avoided, to be placed in opposition to their duty; and, as no man will pretend, that, ingeneral he himself is proof against the temptation which such an opposition presents, to endeavour to prevent others from being exposed to a like temptation never can be regarded as an imputation against either their sense or their integrity. In the present case, too, the *vast number* of the magistrates must not be overlooked. There are, in England and Wales, about eleven thousand parishes; and, though there be no positive authority for stating, that there is a magistrate to every parish, it is probable, that the number of magistrates is not much short of ten or eleven thousand, a number far too great for us to hope, that it does not include some persons, who will be likely to give an oppressive effect to the provisions of the military bill. Let it be remembered, too, that great care ought to be taken now in making further additions to the powers of the inferior magistrates, or in extending the sphere of their influence. Their power has been constantly growing; the poor laws, the game laws, the revenue laws, the numberless penal statutes, which are, comparatively, of modern invention, have thrown into the hands of the justices a degree of influence and power totally unknown to the ancient establishment of their office; while, on the other hand, the *qualifications* for the office have continued nearly the same in nominal amount, and, of course, have, in reality been greatly diminished; so that, in fact, there is, in this branch of our jurisprudence, an augmentation of power with a diminution of responsibility. There is, too, another circumstance not to be overlooked, upon this occasion; to wit; the very important extension, which the power of the inferior magistracy has received in the establishment of the Police Offices. The magistrates belonging to these offices are twenty-five or thirty, perhaps, in number. The establishment has funds, to a considerable amount, at its disposal; the authority of the magistrates extends through the counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent, and Surrey; they are not only magistrates for purposes of police, but for all other purposes, in all these four counties; they have pretty liberal salaries; and, which is a circumstance of no little weight, they hold their offices and their salaries *entirely during pleasure*. No man who views the tranquil state, in which this immense metropolis is kept, can reasonably ob-

ject to the police-institution. It is an excellent one; and, there is every reason to suppose, that the magistrates are chosen with great propriety, and that they discharge their duty in a vigilant and upright manner. Yet, many persons think, that their power should be confined to matters of *police*, properly so called; and, that it would be better if they did not sit at the Quarter Sessions, and if they did not take part in any county or parochial business; for, to place and maintain, in each of the four counties above-mentioned, twenty or thirty justices, who are removable at pleasure, is certainly to put the jurisprudence of those counties upon a footing differing in a considerable degree from that of the other counties of the kingdom. How these observations apply to the military project bill it is easy to perceive; and, if the project is to be enforced, it is to be hoped, that some precaution will be adopted to prevent the police-officers in addition to the parish-officers from becoming recruiters. An attempt has been made to turn into ridicule this "*solicitude* for poachers and vagrants." The solicitude is not for poachers and vagrants so much as for those who may be falsely represented as poachers and vagrants, or, whose faults may, in consequence of the operation of this bill, be augmented a thousand fold; and, if the persons sent to the army be really guilty, then the evil consists in the injury and disgrace which the service will receive. In short, if the fines should be sufficient to induce parish-officers and magistrates to exert, to the utmost extent, and to stretch a little, their power and influence, the recruits they send to the army must and will consist either of the oppressed or the criminal, and they must inevitably communicate to that army either discontent or infamy.——Of a piece with the last cited argument of Mr. Pitt is another, which he made use of by way of answer to what Mr. Windham had said respecting the effect, which the wide and unbounded extension of the military dress, names, and ranks, had *in lowering the military character and spirit*. "My right hon. friend," says he, 'has said, "that the existence of a secondary force "tends to injure the military character; "but, whether the different descriptions of "military force, the militia, army of re"serve, volunteers, sea-fencibles, &c. now "to be found throughout the nation, has "produced the effect mentioned, or *whether "the officers and soldiers of the regular army "were ever held higher in general estima"tion*, I will leave to be answered by any "man, who has had the least opportunity of "observation. It is," added he, "rather "singular, that the same right hon. gent. "who, at one time, talked so gloomily and "almost despondingly of our danger, but "who now professed to feel that danger not "so menacing, should yet state, that the "very force, *to which we owe our security "from that danger*, is composed of men, "'dissevered from danger,' and, not only "unfit to be soldiers, but that their even "wearing the military dress is a disgrace to "the soldier's character." That Mr. Pitt meant to represent Mr. Windham as conveying an idea, that the officers and soldiers, at present serving in the regular army, had *personally* sunk in the general estimation, is not to be believed; but, that he would be so understood by many persons is certain. Mr. Windham never meant, nor did he ever say, any such thing. He has, over and over again, asserted, that the *distinctive pride*, that the *esprit-du-corps*, have, in the army itself, and that the *profession of arms*, the military *calling and character*, have, in the minds of the mass of the people, been materially lowered already, and are daily sinking, in consequence of the boundless diffusion of military dress and rank; and, this is a truth, which no man, at all acquainted with the state of the army and the country, will venture to deny. Much mischief was done, in this way, by the existence of the militia, especially after it became so numerous. Nevertheless, what the militia officers wanted in point of military service and fame, was, in some sort, compensated for by title or fortune. If an officer in the army saw rank equal to his own enjoyed by a person, who had never, perhaps, seen, and never intended to see, an hour's service, he felt gratified by the reflection that the person so assuming military honours was a nobleman or a gentleman. But, what has there been to console the officers of the army, since the volunteer system let loose all the hair dressers, shoe-makers, and taylors in the kingdom to scramble for commissions? Where can a lieutenant of the army go to hide himself from the superior command of some volunteer captain, whom, perhaps, if he should pass him a few hours afterwards, he will see bowing and scraping to some gentleman's footman? It is notorious, and it is talked of all through the army, that the regular officers have greatly sunk in the scale of society; and, indeed, it is utterly impossible that it should be otherwise. A captain in the army, for instance, was formerly considered, as to many civil rights, upon a footing with persons of the three learned professions; and, of course, ranked, and was addressed, as an Esquire. What is become

of this rank now? Law, Physic, and Divinity, suffer no volunteering to trench upon the eminence that they claim and are entitled to; but, the whole race of shopkeepers and handicrafts men have been encouraged and supported in invading the distinctions of the army. The navy take good care that no land or fresh water lubbers shall render their honours cheap: but, the army is, in this respect, completely abandoned: an officer or a soldier has now no more chance of distinction than a tinker or his journeyman has. "What harm," says some meek and modest shop keeper, "does this here "title of mine do to that there title of "yours? You are still a captain, and you "were no more before I got my commis-"sion." If such a person were to be reasoned with, one might ask him, whether he thinks that the title of Duke would have the same value that it has now, if every wealthy, talkative, and impudent shop-keeper could get himself made a duke. But, the injury to the army is real; it is seen and felt continually; and, if this system continues, the consequence will be, that no gentleman, no man of sentiment, or of education superior to that of the mere vulgar, will go into the army; and, those men of this description, who are now in it, will quit it, whenever they conveniently can. Mr. Pitt may be angry with them; he and those who think with him may rail at them: but, they have their feelings as well as he; and, though he may compel them, for the sake of bread, to submit to the society, and, in some cases, even to the command, of his shopkeepers, he may rest assured, that neither the service nor the country will derive any advantage from his perseverance.—As to Mr. Windham's talking gloomily and despondingly of our danger, he never entertained any fear, except that of a want of activity and energy in the country. Provided the country were well prepared, and was willing to do its best, he entertained no apprehensions at all from the power of the enemy. "It is strange," says Mr. Pitt, "he should now state, that the very force, "*to which we owe our security from the dan-*"*ger*, is composed of men, whose wearing "the military dress is a disgrace to the pro-"fession of a soldier." Never did Mr. Windham state any such thing. Never did he state, *that we owed our security from danger to the volunteers*, or to any other of those bodies, of which he was complaining as being the cause of a degradation of the military profession and character. Never; never has he ascribed the forbearance of the enemy to any such cause; and, it must be confessed, that, in attaching this importance exclusively to the corps, with which he had been lately making such a parading opposite the enemy's coast, Mr. Pitt discovered no small share of puerility of mind. So far from thinking, that we owe "our security "from danger" to the volunteer corps, it is evident, that, in the first place, neither Mr. Windham nor any body thinks that we are secure from danger; and, there can be no doubt that Mr. Windham is persuaded, that a great part of our danger arises from the want of that army, which the volunteer and other irregular establishments have hitherto prevented us from having. But, it has been observed, that this is a mode of arguing, in which Mr. Pitt excels. If you object to any thing, which he proposes or supports, instead of combating your objection upon the grounds on which you have built it, he transfers it to such grounds as suit himself, and, as you have seldom an opportunity of replying, your cause is left under the effect of the misrepresentation.—It is said, by the minister and his friends, that the opposition, while they find fault of the project submitted to them, propose nothing of their own. "If," said Mr. Pitt, "I am told, "that this plan is not adequate to the pur-"pose in view, I will call upon the gentle-"men, who make the objection, to propose "something of their own, or, to suggest "what they would deem necessary to alter "or amend in this plan." In answer to this, it may first be observed, that, whatever there is of good in this plan, that is to say, the abolition of the ballot, the reduction of the militia, the rendering of substitutes unnecessary, and the proposal to destroy the competition against the regular army, are to be ascribed to the opposition, and particularly to the wisdom and perseverance of Mr. Windham, whose whole attention appears to have been turned towards the means of replenishing and supporting the army. After having taken from the opposition so much, it was rather hard to call upon them for more. But, more was ready for them; for, Mr. Windham, in the very speech, which Mr. Pitt was answering, had pointed out some, at least, of the means which he would propose to be made use of for reviving the army. The reporter of the debate tells us, that Mr. Windham concluded his speech with "strenuously recommending to the "minister to try the ordinary means of re-"cruiting, unshackled as to locality, un-"checked by competition, and unpoluted "by the touch of crimps and thief takers. "The present, he said, was allowed to be a "plan of experiment; and he urged the

" propriety of first trying the effect of al-
" tering the condition of service in the re-
" gular army, and of making that condition
" unlimited as to place, but limited as to
" time. If this, together with certain minor
" regulations, were adopted, he would ven-
" ture to affirm, he said, that thousands of
" recruits would be found to enter, without
" the assistance of parish-officers and penal
" laws, and that the military character
" would again be what it formerly was."
This was certainly proposing something. But, say the partisans of the minister, " this " is nothing *positive:* this is *doing* nothing: it is only *undoing*, or leaving *not done*." Yes, it is certainly throwing away " the ladder of " ropes," and, therefore, to you, who are resolved to go down the side of the house instead of walking out of the street door, the proposition must appear good for nothing; but, to other men, who have no such romantic propensity, to get rid of that which impedes recruiting will certainly be regarded as a positive measure for recruiting the army. After all, however, it is always with a very bad grace, that a minister calls upon the opposition for plans. Their business is, not to propose plans, but to see that his are good, or to reject them. It may be proper for any one to suggest an alteration or an amendment to that which he finds he cannot prevent passing into a law; but, this, too, must be left to his own discretion; for, he may think, that it is better for the country, that the bill should pass with all its imperfections on its head, as being the most effectual means of causing it to be repealed.——It was not intended to take any notice of the detail of the bill; but, since it was first printed there has been a provision introduced, which merits particular attention, especially as the circumstances of its introduction serve further to show the wavering state of the minister's mind upon this great and weighty matter. At the close of the preceding sheet of the Register, it was stated, that, in consequence of the abolition of the ballot, the volunteer-exemptions would cease to exist; but, it was, at the same time, observed, that this circumstance could not reasonably be complained of by the volunteers, because, they would not now become liable to the effect of any ballot, and it could hardly be supposed, that the seeing of others relieved from those effects would be any source of vexation to them. There was another description of persons, however, who appeared to have more reason for complaint, namely, those who were actually serving in person or by substitute in the militia or army of reserve: to make them bear their proportion of the burden of the quota, after they had borne the full weight of the ballot, seemed, at first sight, to be unjust; but, upon a closer examination of the matter, it appeared, that any attempt at a remedy must be worse than the evil. Such an attempt is, nevertheless, made in the new clause above alluded to. First, however, it is necessary to observe that this clause owes its existence to an anonymous letter, sent, by Saturday's post, from Liverpool, to several members of Parliament, amongst whom the minister, doubtless, was not forgotten. As this is a very curious fact in legislative history, it is worth while to insert this letter at length. " A letter " to a Member of Parliament. Liverpool, " June 9, 1804 SIR, About twelve months " since, I was balloted for the supplemen-
" tary militia for the parish of Liverpool,
" and paid thirty guineas to provide a sub-
" stitute. The faith of Parliament was
" then pledged to me, that I should be
" clear of further expense as to the militia
" and army of reserve for five years at
" least; if not for life.——I see a bill now
" brought into Parliament by Mr. Pitt, un-
" der which, if passed into law, I shall be
" liable to pay, in parish rates, for the sup-
" ply and continuation of the militia, &c.
" as much as my neighbours who were not
" balloted, and have not found substitutes.
" I think this would be great injustice to-
" wards me, and all others in my situation,
" and a direct breach of the faith pledged
" by Parlisment to the nation. Thousands
" who have gone into volunteer com-
" panies to screen themselves from the bal-
" lot, will resign in consequence of such an
" act; and then be liable only to a rate in
" proportion with those who have already
" paid for substitutes; and thus myself and
" others, who have already provided substi-
" tutes at a great expense, will be obliged
" to contribute further for substitutes for
" persons, who, in acting so base a part,
" will be protected by Mr. Pitt's intended
" law: and even the honourable volunteer,
" who devotes his time, his property, and
" his life, to the defence of his country
" will, by such law, be compelled to pay
" fresh rates, in aid of those poltroons who
" shall quit their colours; which such an
" act will invite and encourage them to do.
" ——For these reasons I trust you will use
" all your exertions in the House, that this
" unjust, impolitic, and dangerous bill, do
" not pass into law.—A BALLOTED MAN."
——This gentleman's opinion of the motives and dispositions of the volunteers, or, of many of them, at least, is truly shocking.

If such language had been made use of in the Political Register, assassination, or, perhaps, even worse, would have been threatened. But, these citizen-soldiers, like man and wife, will very freely say of one another what they will cut the throat of a third party for so much as thinking of. Very erroneous indeed are the notions of this Liverpool balloted man; but, previous to an examination of them, we must take a view of the provisions, to which they have given rise. The clause, introduced into the bill, enacts, "that, from and after the passing of this act, no fines or penalties assessed on any parish, by reason of any default in not having provided or produced any men for such additional force, shall be paid out of the poor-rates; but, that, in every such case, a separate, distinct, and special rate shall be made for the payment of such fines, according to such rules and regulations as poor-rates are made: and, such special rate shall be collected, levied, and recovered, by such powers as the poor-rates are collected and recovered: provided, however, that every person serving in any volunteer or yeomanry corps, and, being, in consequence of such service, entitled by law to an exemption from the ballots, shall also be exempted from the above-mentioned special rate, according to the amount of his property, in the following proportion and degree; that is to say; if, in the book of poor-rates, his property stands at the value of twenty pounds, or under, he is to be wholly exempted from the special, or quota, rate; and, if his property stands in the said rate book at a value exceeding twenty pounds, he is, in the assessment of the quota-rate, to be exempted to the extent of twenty pounds; that is, he is to pay only such proportion of the special or quota-rate as he would have paid if his property had stood, in the poor-rate books, at twenty pounds less than it does: provided also, that every person, who shall be now serving, either personally or by substitute, in the militia or army of reserve, shall be wholly exempt from the special or quota-rate."——Such is the substance of the clause, unencumbered by legal tautology. Such are the troublesome, the vexatious, in many respects the odious, and, in every respect, the useless, exceptions, with which, from an unsteadiness of mind, a sense of his weakness, and a dread of the power of his opponents, Mr. Pitt has been induced to load his already too complicated project. To make out a book, in each parish, for a special rate, is a thing which demands no small labour and no short time. And, then, as to making the exceptions, what everlasting complaining and litigation it will give rise to! Besides, how can it ever proceed with the spirit of justice, or obtain the object required? Two thirds of the volunteers are not at all liable to parish assessments; how, therefore, will they find, in the proposed exemption from the quota-rate, a compensation for their exemption from the ballot? Other volunteers will be exempted from the quota-rate; but, a person who has his apprentices or sons in a volunteer corps, and who is too old or infirm to serve himself, will *not* be exempted from the special or quota-rate, while a person who has no apprentice or son serving, but who happens to serve himself, will be exempted from the rate. Then, as to those who are now serving, either in person or by substitute, in the militia or army of reserve, the application of the exemption will be full as capricious as in the case of the volunteers. Men who are actually serving in person need not have been mentioned; for, certainly, they will not be included in this quota-rate, or any other rate; and, with respect to those who are serving by substitute, either they are persons, who were able to pay for a substitute out of their own pocket, and who, therefore, can scarcely feel the effect of the quota-rate, or, they are persons, who, being unable to provide a substitute out of their own means, had recourse to clubs, and who, therefore, have no more right to be exempt from the quota-rate than every other member of their clubs respectively. Nay, it will be found, in many cases, that persons who will, in virtue of this clause, claim an exemption from the quota-rate, have had the expense of their substitute defrayed, in great part, by persons too poor to be liable to the parish rates. The allegation of the Liverpool balloted man, that the Parliament would, unless this special rate and exemption were adopted, be guilty of a *breach of faith* towards the persons who have already borne the burden of the ballot, is very specious, but it, nevertheless, is very fallacious. These persons have, indeed, borne *the ballot*; but, has not every man who has not been drafted, borne the *chance* of the ballot? The former are only in that situation in which the latter might have been: one has been drafted and the other not, from causes over which neither of them had any control. It is not at the close, but at the beginning, of the drawing, that you are to view the situation of the parties. The moment their names are put in the ballot-bag each is to be regarded as having borne a burden equal to every other. In fact, according to the ballot system, the burden is in the *chance* and

not in the *draft*. The soundness of this reasoning is amply proved by facts; for, the dangers of the ballot has given rise to a system of *insurance*; and, though, as in trade, some men have chosen to be their own insurers, or, in other words, to run the risk of paying the whole cost of a substitute, they are not, on that account, to be considered as entitled to any particular favour, indulgence, or exemption. Breach of faith truly! Let us see a little to what lengths this notion may be carried, if Parliament should once give way to it. Suppose all the militia and army of reserve had been abolished for ever, and that no quota-men, or any other men than regular soldiers, had been to be raised. What would the Liverpool balloted man have said in that case? He could have asked for no exemption, for there would have been no special or quota-rate. Would he have asked for the continuation of the militia, of the army of reserve, and of the ballot system, merely because he had borne the burden of that system, and because his countrymen should, if possible, all bear it as well as he? Such a man would object to peace, or to any circumstance, that should prevent others from bearing burdens similar to that which he has borne. Admit the justice of his principle, and you must hesitate before you adopt any measure for relieving posterity from any burden supported by us of the present day. Never was any thing so preposterous. The ballot system was sanctioned by law; it lasted for a certain time; during that time, *every* man, not exempted from it by law, was equally exposed to the *chance* of its burdens; and now, if it be put an end to, the men who were *not* drafted are, in the eye of law and justice, upon exactly the same footing, with regard to it, as the men who *were* drafted. Again; according to what rule of justice is it, that a person who is serving by substitute in the militia is to enjoy the same exemption as one who is serving by substitute in the army of reserve, when the substitute of the latter, cost, perhaps, fifty pounds, while that of the former did not exceed ten or twelve pounds? Then, let it be remembered, that, in many, very many parishes, there was *no balloting* for the army of reserve; the money necessary to raise the men was levied by a parish-rate, and the substitutes were obtained from those honest gentlemen, who, in compassion to the wives and sweet-hearts of his Majesty's male subjects, keep offices and other buildings for the purpose, as Mr. Wilberforce would call it, of trafficking in human flesh. This happens to be the situation of the very parish in which the Parliament is sitting; and, it would be worth while to ask what mode the Liverpool "balloted-man" would point out for making to the parishioners of St. Margaret, Westminster, a compensation for the expenses which they have incurred on account of substitutes for the army of reserve. —— In short, this military bill of Mr. Pitt, which was before, in many respects, hardly reducible to common sense, is, by these new provisions, introduced from a mixture of fickleness and fear, rendered a mass of absurdity such as never before found its way to the table of a legislative assembly.

STATE OF PARTIES.—The late divisions in the House of Commons would seem to indicate, that the present ministry stands upon a foundation not much more solid than the last. What the division of this night (Friday) may produce, I know not; but, it is not expected, that it will discover any symptoms favourable to the minister. Very deep and general discontent at the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in patching up the present ministry, prevails through the country, and is heard amongst all ranks, and all descriptions of persons. His literary partisans, in whom, by the bye, he is extremely poor, have tried to its utmost, the cry against *coalitions*, and the *forcing* of ministries upon the king. This trick succeeded to a miracle twenty years ago; but, tricks of this sort seldom succeed a second time, especially when people have paid so dearly for them. Some faint attempts have been made to conjure up the ghost of jacobinism and again to make Mr. Pitt the Anti-Jacobin hero. If this could be accomplished, then, indeed, were he safe. But, alas! the materials are wanting: Buonaparté has completely extinguished the principle: and, it would be utterly impossible to make any one man in England, except he be an Anti-Jacobin by trade, listen, for a single moment, to any harangue upon the subject. The "pilot that weathered the storm" is, therefore, in a situation entirely new: he can expect no support from the persuasion, which prevailed during the last war, that the duration of his power was identified with the existence of the monarchy. Many persons, very anxious for the welfare of that monarchy, entertain an exactly opposite opinion. He has no resource left. He has nothing new to offer. He has no hope to present to the country. All his showy schemes for the extension of trade, the augmentation of riches, and the discharge of debt, have been tried, and have proved to be bubbles. Men have had time to reflect; they have traced him through his measures and the consequences of his measures. Those, who are the least capa-

ble of inquiry, compare the state of the country, when he took possession of it twenty years ago, with its present state: they know well, without any reasoning upon the subject, they *feel*, that he has had the absolute command of the nation from that day to this; and they fail not to draw a conclusion by no means advantageous to him, but not, for that reason, the less rational or just. In their comparison they forget not the situation of our constant rival and enemy. They remember the decrepid state of France, they remember the boundaries of her territory and her influence, at the time when all the power of England was lodged in the hands of Mr. Pitt; and, they cannot help observing the fearful change that has taken place, since he has been the depository of that power. This is a course of reasoning so natural, that it is, and must be, pursued by every mind. It is not, therefore, to a division in the House of Commons that I look, in order to be able to calculate the duration of Mr. Pitt's power; but, to the steady, the rapidly advancing, and the finally irresistible, effect of public opinion as to the past, aided by the force of the events which will inevitably arise from a perseverence in those systems, upon the success of which Mr. Pitt's reputation was founded, and is yet thought to rest. We do not live in times, when a ministry is to be supported, for any considerable period, by court intrigue, or by party juggle or arrangement. We are going on at present under certain systems, which, independent of all adventitious circumstances, must sink either the minister or the country. As an enemy of these systems, I wish them to die a natural death; because, if they are prematurely cut off by an event, which they can have had no share in producing, both they and their founder may one day revive. By all means, therefore, it is desirable, that Mr. Pitt should meet with no other interruption than that which will naturally arise from an opposition in Parliament and from the effects of his measures out of doors. The cause of interruption, alluded to, and which, on other accounts, every man in the kingdom would join in deploring, must be particularly painful to the members of the opposition, who, in that case, would find themselves somewhat in the situation of the boxer, whose antagonist, when just about to yield, was crushed by the falling of a house, leaving the question of victory undecided.

CORN LAWS.

SIR,—The report of the Committee on the Corn Laws having made its appearance in some of the public prints, I cannot help noticing, that with all the ability, information, and accuracy, with which the reports of the Committees of the Honourable House are characterised, this report seems to have lost sight of the root of the mischief exclusively, namely, taxation.——The Committee state, and I have no doubt of the veracity of that statement, that for the space of about forty years, this kingdom exported corn that produced an annual sum of £700,000; but, that during the last seventeen years, not less than thirty millions has been paid to foreign countries for the like article ——The Committee advert to the increased price of labour, and the restrictions of the present Corn Laws as if they alone were the causes of these alterations of circumstances, and as if a new code of regulations would make this country capable of producing and exporting grain as formerly. Why, Sir, the price of freight alone is doubled within these last seventeen years! and shipping, even with that advance, is a notorious losing concern by the excessive tonnage dues lately imposed, added to the high wages paid to seamen at this crisis.—— If bounties are granted when the price of corn is higher than the present limited standard export price, the public will complain, and the poor will be much injured; add to these evils the bounties are a deduction from revenue, the solution of the whole is, therefore, that while we have paper money, anticipated revenue, and consequently excessive taxation, we cannot grow, much less export, grain upon the same terms, or navigate our ships at so low a rate of freight as the Americans, Prussians, and Russians do, where land is cheap and labour and taxes moderate.——L.

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